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Alleged misappropriation of Government Printing Paper by a Private Press

* 3158 *Q.*—SRI P. RANGASWAMY REDDIAR : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the white printing paper given to the " Pinjarapole Press ", Tiruchirappalli, for printing electoral rolls in 1951 was pledged by the press with the Tamilnad Central Bank, Limited, and another private banker and electoral rolls printed and supplied with an inferior quality of paper;

(*b*) if so, the action taken against the Proprietor of the Press;

(*c*) the expenses incurred by the Government for any criminal proceedings conducted against the Press; and

(*d*) whether any amount was recovered from the Proprietor of the Press?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : (*a*) & (*b*) The Proprietor of Chandra Vilas Pinjarapole Press, Tiruchirappalli, was supplied with about 1,640 reams of paper of 20, 32 and 42 pounds during the period 19th September 1952 and 9th March 1953 for printing the electoral rolls of Tiruchirappalli district. It was alleged that he pledged 99 reams out of this paper with Messrs. Gordhan Das Bagavandas for Rs. 1,200 and another 275 reams with the Tamilnad Central Bank, Tiruchirappalli, for Rs. 5,500 and later converted the paper for his own use contrary to the agreement executed by him with the Collector of Tiruchirappalli. A charge-sheet was filed against him before the Additional First-class Magistrate, Tiruchirappalli, who found him guilty under Section 406, I.P.C., and sentenced him to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one year. He filed an appeal against this conviction to the District and Sessions Judge, Tiruchirappalli. The District Judge allowed the appeal and set aside the conviction and sentence. The question of filing an appeal against acquittal is under consideration.

(*c*) An expenditure of about Rs. 2,044 was incurred by way of Travelling Allowance and contingencies in connexion with the investigation of the case by the staff of the Crime Branch, C.I.D.

(*d*) No.

SRI P. RANGASWAMY REDDIAR : What is the difference in
9-20 a.m. price between the quality supplied by the Government and the paper used by the printer? May I know, Sir, whether any special Public Prosecutor was sent from Madras to prosecute this case and, if so, what may be the reasons?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I would like to have notice, Sir.

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM : Sir, the pledgees and the Proprietor of the Press, both of them seem to be guilty in this case. Does the Government contemplate to file any suit for recovering the difference in prices?

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THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I do not think the pledges can be brought under criminal law in any event.

SRI M. PALANIYANDI : இது திருச்சியில் நடந்த ஒரு முக்கியமான சம்பவம் ஆகும். இது விஷயமாக மேல் கோர்ட்டுக்கு அப்பீல் செய்வதற்கு அரசாங்கம் ஏதாவது நடவடிக்கை எடுக்குமா என்று கேட்கிறேன்.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : நானும் அதைத்தான் சொன்னேன். அதைப்பற்றிய விஷயம் அரசாங்கத்தின் ஆலோசனையில் இருந்துவருகிறது.

SRI M. P. SUBRAMANYAM : Sir, the allegation made is that the printing paper supplied by the Government was not used for printing the electoral rolls. Is it so?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : The charge against the Proprietor of the Press was that he misapplied the paper supplied to him and used it for the purpose of preparing note-books for school children.

SRI P. RANGASWAMY REDDIAR : Was there any distinct mark on the paper supplied by the Government to distinguish it from other kinds of paper, i.e., to show that it belonged to the Government? When and how this crime was detected and by whom?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : Sir, it was detected by the Crime Branch, C.I.D. Their investigation showed that the paper supplied by the Government was misapplied by the Printer. That is why, the charge sheet was laid. One court convicted him. Of course, the appellate court has set aside the conviction. The matter is under consideraion whether an appeal against the acquittal can be filed or not. In view of the interest taken by the hon. Member, I think we should file an appeal and see the result of the appeal.

SRI S. RAMALINGAM : என்ன காரணம் காட்டி செஷன்ஸ் நீதிபதி அவர்கள் அவருக்கு விடுதலை கொடுத்தார்கள் என்று சொல்ல முடியுமா ?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I do not think, Sir, I can go into the grounds on which the Sessions Court acquitted the accused.

SRI S. PANCHAKSHARAM : Sir, it is apparent that the paper supplied to the Printer was of superior quality. It is also apparent that the paper used by him for printing the electoral rolls was of inferior quality. May I know, Sir, whether the Government are taking any action for the recovery of the difference in prices in civil court?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : First, we will have to decide about the criminal liability of the printer. Then, the question of recovering the difference in cost will be considered.

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN : Who selected this Press, Sir?

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THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : Sir, a procedure is laid down for the purpose of selecting the printer. Tenders are called for and the Collector makes the selection.

SRI M. P. SUBRAMANYAM : When the appellate court gives a decision, may I know ,Sir, how long does it take for the Government to consider whether to file an appeal or not? Is there any time limit prescribed?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : Yes, Sir. There is a time limit prescribed in the Criminal Procedure Code. If we want to file an appeal, we will have to do it within the time limit.

Hospitals in Estates and Plantation areas

* 3159 *Q*.—SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether all Estate and Plantation areas in the State are provided with hospitals; and

(*b*) whether qualified doctors are in charge of those hospitals?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : (*a*) Complete information is not available, Sir. Many of the estates have either hospitals or dispensaries.

(*b*) All big hospitals have one or more qualified doctors. The dispensaries are generally managed by the qualified compounders and the patients are treated by visiting doctors.

The Plantation Labour Act requires every employer to provide medical facilities on the plantations. The rules under the Act have since been published. Under the rules, hospital facilities will have to be provided by the plantations before 31st December 1956.

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN : Have the Government any means in their possession for finding out whether the hospitals are run and equipped up to the medical standard in view of the fact that glorified compounders are running amuck as Medical Officers in many of the hospitals?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Sir, under the rules framed under the Plantation Labour Act, Government propose to appoint necessary staff which will go into the whole question.

SRI K. P. GOPALAN : In view of the fact that there are so many Estates without hospitals and the workers there are suffering a lot for want of doctors, will the Government be pleased to implement the rules immediately so as to give relief to the thousands of workers in the Estates?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Government do mean implementing the rules presently.